

# Proceedings at the First Meeting

OF THE STAFF OF THE

## St. Louis Public Library

IN THE

### New Central Building



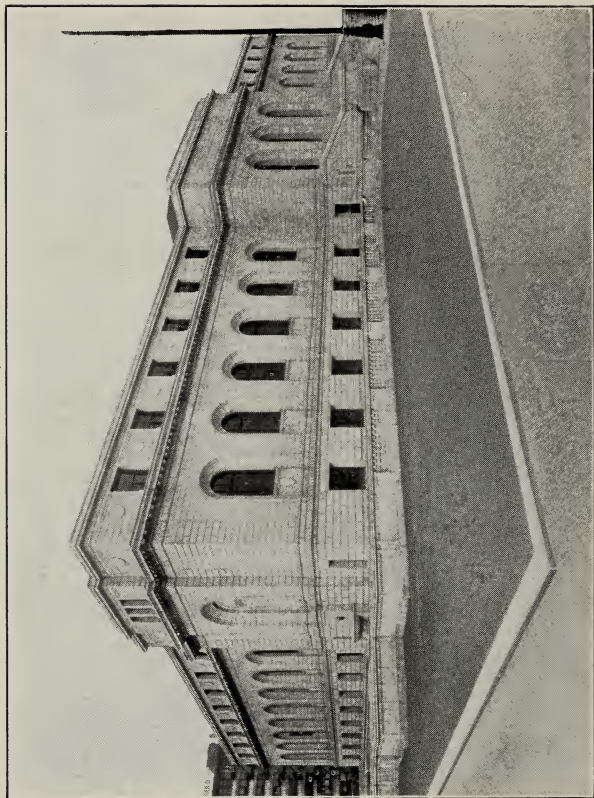
ST. LOUIS

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1912

OAK ST. HDSF





ST. LOUIS PUBLIC LIBRARY.  
Showing the Staff Entrance under the Stairway.



An Account of the Proceedings in Prose  
and Verse

# Lyric, Epic and Dramatic

AT THE

Ninth General Meeting of the St. Louis Public  
Library Staff

December 29, 1911

Being the First Held in the New  
Central Building

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ST. LOUIS

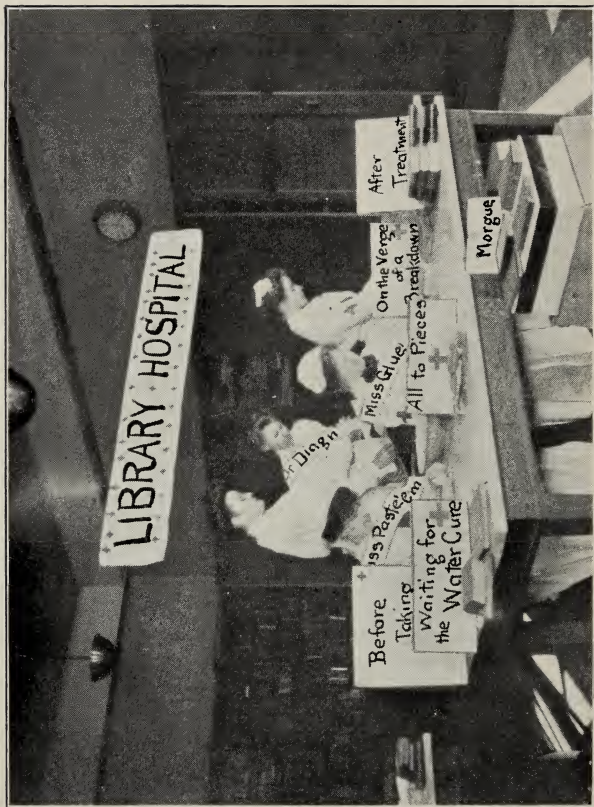
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A little nonsense now and then  
Is relished by the wisest men.

*Old Proverb.*





LIBRARY NURSES IN THE LIBRARY HOSPITAL.





## Staff Meeting

The first staff meeting of the St. Louis Public Library in the new building took the form of an introduction of the staff to the various rooms and departments. It was held on Thursday evening, Dec. 29, the date being placed more than a week earlier than the formal opening of the building in order not to interfere with the moving, and the hour being set at 9:30 p. m. so that all the members of the staff should be able to attend. At that hour about 100 members, with a few friends, gathered in the Lunch Room on the ground floor and proceeded in turn to each of the rooms on the various floors, preceded by a herald (Donald Watson, of the staff), attired in appropriate medieval garb. At each door the herald blew his trumpet and made proclamation as follows:

"A goodly company is now approaching the doors of your domain."

The department chief, stepping forward, shook hands with the Librarian, and said: "Right glad we are to have you enter the portals of our new home and great pleasure it will give us to disclose to you the beauties and wonders thereof."

After inspecting the department the Librarian took leave of the department head as follows: "We thank you well for the hearty welcome tendered us. Pray join us now in our march as we journey, further wonders to discover."

The department head and her staff then joined the procession on its way to the next room.

The receptions in the various rooms varied, according to the taste and ability of those who had charge of them, from a simple recital of the foregoing ritual, with an inspection of the room, to an entertainment of some kind.

In the Bindery the staff found a completely equipped book-hospital, with Miss Wheelock as head nurse and her assistants as nurses, wearing appropriate costumes, with Red Cross badges. Tables bore specimens of books in various stages of repair and disrepair, with such notices as "Children's Diseases a Specialty;" "Morgue;" "After Treatment;" etc.

Big sign—

LIBRARY HOSPITAL.

Large Placard—

"Before taking our marvelous treatment."

Small Placards—

"On the verge of a break-down."

"'All gone' feeling." (Empty covers.)

"Hydrophobia or (Puppy) Dog-bite."

"All to pieces."

"Waiting in turn for our famous water cure."

"Diseases of Children a Specialty."

Second Large Placard—

"After Treatment." (Newly rebound books.)

"Morgue." (Condemned books.)

"Consultation free."

Instruments (shears, knives, etc.) arranged on bolt of cheese-cloth (surgeon's tissue).

All signs and cards decorated with Red Cross emblem.

Presided over by—

Dr. Diagnos-em.

Dr. Fix-em-good-as-new.

Nurses—

Miss Glue-em.

Miss Patch-em.

Miss Check-em (all in nurses' uniform).

In the Open Shelf Room was discovered a member of the staff tucked up cosily in bed, reading—a gentle reminder of a large fiction percentage. A placard bore the legend, "The female of the species is more deadly than the male." The recumbent reader's face was boyish, but a frilled nightcap lent it some feminine charm. The assistants here were tastefully garbed in book-reviews.

In the general delivery room the head of the department and her assistants appeared at the delivery desk attired as waitresses at a lunch counter. The following, written by Miss Gladys Chew, was read by Miss Weissenborn:

EPIC OF THE CIRCULATION DEPARTMENT.

"Be seated, kind patrons, places for two?

(They look like two hundred) this table will do.

The call slips are napkins, the pencils, though lead,

Become by our magic fine silver instead.

Now refer to our menu, the card catalogue,

Which contains all our viands from nectar to grog;

For an entree you'd like dear Margery Daw,

Or Arms and the Man by G. Bernard Shaw.

For soup—cream of onion—have you a strong will?

It's guaranteed wholesome and quite sure to fill.

The life of A. Lincoln by Ida Tarbell

Is nourishing bouillon and may do as well.

The crackers, of course, are the Human Machine,

And a Message to Garcia; they're both small and lean.

We serve as a relish Plain Tales from the Hills

To warm up your blood and ward off the chills.

The olives are easily Hunting the Snark,  
Unless you prefer to have When it Was Dark.  
Then clear off the table for course number three;  
We'll all be as lively as waiters can be.

### Chorus.

For we're waiters at the Booky Inn and P. L. is our sign.  
We serve you meals with drink and cheer from nine a. m. to nine.

### II.

Science and Health must be water, we think;  
It flows out so freely, is harmless to drink,  
And by this same token, where bread's used at home,  
We give to our public Myers' History of Rome.  
What's Wrong with the World makes a good course of fish,  
With moss and white pebbles, or cooked, if you wish.  
In a History of Greece there's butter galore,  
By Bury or Oman or Somebody Moore.  
The French Revolution and Banzai are game;  
Elwell on Bridge and Dicke are the same.  
The Sick-Abed Lady and Flower of the Dusk  
The nice squashy jelly, sweeter than musk.  
Then sharpen your teeth and prepare for the roast—  
We'll bring you the best that our kitchen can boast.

### Chorus.

For we're waiters in the Booky Inn and P. L. is our sign.  
We serve you meals with drink and cheer from nine a. m. to nine.

### III.

You'll find, we are sure, that the roast beef is fine;  
It's Ridpath's big history in class nine 0 nine.  
The Worcestershire sauce from another high shelf  
Is one we all relish—be good to yourself.  
You demand mashed potatoes plus gravy with this;  
We serve Stoddard's travels and Life on the Miss.  
And Balzac and Zola will do for French peas,  
Toned down with cream dressing—revised, if you please.  
A salad that's chic and crispy and nice  
Is prepared by our cook in a shade of a trice,  
With Maeterlinck's Blue Bird, The Fruit of the Tree,  
And celery and raisins from sixty-three b.  
The rich mayonnaise that he piles on it then  
Is made from the eggs of that good Dollar Hen.  
Then ho! for the coffee, the nuts and the cheese:  
We'll shortly supply you with plenty of these.

### Chorus.

For we're waiters in the Booky Inn and P. L. is our sign.  
We serve you meals with drink and cheer from nine a. m. to nine.

THE REFERENCE DEPARTMENT IS REPRESENTING CERTAIN  
IMPORTANT WORKS OF REFERENCE.

After reading these titles you are invited to inspect the shelves.

MOODY, Katharine T. Encyclopedia Britannica. 11th ed.

*Note.* Incomplete, imperfect, not at present wholly accessible to the public.

BOSTWICK, Andrew Linn. Civil engineers' pocket book.

*Note.* Stolen.

POWELL, Mary. Contemporary review. v. 70.

*Note.* Lost at Cabanne Branch. Can be replaced for \$3.00.

CHEW, Clara. Rand-McNally Atlas.

*Note.* Completely worn out.

ROEMER, Mary V. Last volumes Murray's dictionary. Publication first appeared in 1888.

*Note.* Not here yet.

SHEEHAN, Patrick. Blue book.

*Note.* Can't find; probably out of place.

In the training-class room the instructor received the company by pointing to the assembled class, standing in a row, and remarking (in verses composed by Miss Mary D. Pretlow):

Mrs. Sawyer speaking—

"This is the band I'm teaching All  
From aeroplanes to Adam's fall,  
The Reason of the Cosmos, the Thusness of the Why,  
The Riddle of the Universe, why men are born or die;  
In anonyms and synonyms and isms all they bask,  
Till they can answer anything that I may chance to ask.  
To show you, then, how quick the mind,  
I'll ask them now where they would find  
The answer to this question, 'Why did the hen cross the road?'"

Students—

1. "In *What's* what."
2. "In *how's* what."
3. "In *how's how*."
4. "In *when's* how."
5. "In *when's when*."
6. "In *when's* where."
7. "In *where's where*."
8. "In *where's* when."
9. "In *when's that*."
10. "In *that's* that."
11. "In *that's then*."
12. "In *then's* this."
13. "In *this's* why."
14. "No, in *why's why*."

"That will tell why the hen crossed the road."

As each member of the class spoke she emphasized one word and turned her head quickly to the one who had just spoken as if correcting



"THE CATALOGUER'S DREAM."  
Inkblack and Inkred before the Queen.





her. As they spoke quickly the turning of the heads appeared like the opening of a fan.

Chorus of Class (by Miss L. Griggs):

"Look well upon this haggard band;  
We are the slaves of library hand;  
Abused are we by everyone  
From early morn till day is done."

" 'Tis Mrs. Sawyer, look at her!  
Who's changed us from what once we were.  
Erst we were merry, gay and free,  
Until she got her hands on We.  
From pillar unto post we go,  
Our speed is counted—fast or slow.  
Instructed, patronized, advised;  
Revised, despised and supervised.  
  
But just the same  
In us you see  
The future of the Librar-rie."

In the cataloguing room, after the usual proclamation by the herald and the response thereto, Miss Wagner, chief of the department, greeted her guests as follows:

"Two pages here are ready  
To guide you round the hall;  
But come quickly to the front again—  
You'll see the best of all."

After inspecting at the further end of the room the imposing tomb of a decrepit article of furniture, brought from the old building, the guests returned to the front and were entertained with the following play from the pen of Miss Uhlemeyer:

#### THE CATALOGUER'S DREAM.

*Time:* Midnight.

*Place:* Catalogue Department, St. Louis Public Library.

#### CAST OF CHARACTERS.

Official cat, the Queen.....	Mrs. Lemmon
Father Time .....	Miss Aegerter
Ripper, a magician.....	Miss Carnahan
Sir Book, a knight.....	Miss Rank
Lord Current News.....	Miss Stevens
Inkred } Villains.....	{ Miss Feary
Inkblack }	{ Miss Gavigan
Paste, also a villain.....	Miss Wheat
Brush, his accomplice.....	Miss Meehan
Pocket .....Romeo .....	Miss Van der Lippe
and	
Card .....Juliet .....	Miss Haagen
A cataloguer, addicted to somnambulism.....	Miss La Grave
Mother, a voice.....	Miss Uhlemeyer
Catalogue cards, shelf cards, guides, etc., attendant upon the Queen.	

The Queen is seated on her throne. The clock walks in, striking a bell—12 strokes.

Queen:—

Come forth, my loyal subjects—  
Now for affairs of state;  
My willing ear attends you—  
Your troubles, small and great.

Catalogue-card (with finger-print on face):—

Oh, Queen! Behold my countenance!  
A finger-print is plainly seen.  
Can't something, then, be done to keep  
The cataloguer's fingers clean?

(While Catalogue-card is speaking, Ripper walks across stage and cuts book.)

Typewriter:—

What, ho there, villain!  
Wouldst thou a knight attack?

Sir Book:—

Nay! nay! kind sir! Without Ripper  
All utterance would I lack. (Turns and speaks to Queen.)  
Oh, Queen! This morn two villains  
Of black and bloody hues  
Assaulted—nigh destroyed me!  
Oh, Queen! give them their dues!

Queen:—

Go! Bring them hither.

Lord Current News (brings forward Inkred and Inkblack):—

Here they are.

Queen:—

What is this I hear, Sirs?

Inkred

Inkblack (together):—

Oh, Queen! Be sure, the fault's not ours.  
It is the cataloguer's.  
Quite powerless in her hands we are.  
We went but as directed.

Lord Current News:—

Oh, Queen! But hear me now and have  
That villain Paste ejected. (Speaking to Inkred and Inkblack):  
Behold my face all ripped and torn.  
Look! How besmeared by Paste, Sirs!

Paste and Brush:—

Oh, Queen! Be sure, the fault's not ours;  
It is the cataloguer's.

Juliet (screams):—

Oh! I see a ghost!



Romeo:—

Sh! It is a cataloguer!  
She's walking in her sleep.

Queen:—

Be quiet all! Methinks  
She is about to speak.

Cataloguer:—

Ah! "The cataloguer's Utopia!"  
Typewriters, cards, pens, books  
Do the work themselves in this new day.  
Each knows its duty and does it well,  
And the cataloguer gets the pay.  
No more digging! No more dirt!  
No more worry. No more work.

All:—

No more work! ! ! !

Cataloguer (screams and runs away):—

Oh, Mother! Help—I'm falling!

Mother (a voice):—

Daisy! Did you hear?  
Get up. The clock is striking six,  
And you'll be late for work, my dear.

In the Librarian's office the librarian read the following verses and then distributed to those present copies of the program of the "playlet" given by members of the staff immediately afterward, in the staff Assembly Room:

Up in the top of the Library Ship  
The Pilot House shall be—  
Where the Pilot sits and gazes out  
O'er the brick and mortar sea.

Fraught with the thoughts of the great and good,  
The ship puts out from shore.  
She is going to carry it all for food  
To readers many a score.

And as he hearkens his window through  
To the Auto-Bird's wild note—  
And shrinks as the Corsair Motorman  
Darts past in his Trolley Boat,

He wonders if he may steer his ship  
Where disaster may not befall,  
Twixt Cathedral Rock, now hard a-port,  
And the Starboard City Hall.

Out to the Library's Promised Land  
Where the tax yields 20 mills,  
And the hours are few and the pay is high,  
And 'tis only joy that kills.

Where the Public says, "I thank you, Ma'am,"  
And bows as it takes its book;  
Where fines are paid with a smiling face,  
Instead of a grewsome look.

Oh, when shall we reach that gladsome shore,  
Where the Pilot has fixed his gaze?  
I cannot tell, but I venture to say,  
'Twill take some scores of days.

So the Pilot, who has to steer the ship  
Down the Educational Stream,  
Welcomes you all, ye stokers bold,  
Who furnish the library steam!

The play given in the Assembly Room, which was from the pen of  
Miss Margery Quigley, as follows:

### LIBRARY EFFICIENCY.

A Play in One Act.

Presented by the "Hammer Throwers' Union" of St. Louis, under  
the personal direction and management of Mr. Wm. Wadley, Janitor.

### DRAMATIS PERSONAE.

Miss Iva Branch.....Miss Mary Alexander  
Miss Anna Prentice.....Miss Ruth Robi  
Mr. Soulard Cabanne Barr.....Miss Mary Curran

Action passes in any up-to-date American library.

### IMPORTANT.

All rights in this play are reserved by Miss Margery Quigley or  
her heirs.

It should be expressly understood that any and all kinds of amateur  
performances of this play are forbidden.

*Enter Anna Prentice.*

Song: Public Library. "We sling-a de books and push-a de trucks  
along."

A. P. All books used in this play have been taken from the con-  
demned shelves. Have no further anxiety.

*Enter Iva Branch.*

I. B. Good morning. (Shakes hands—makes records.) Morning  
greetings, one-half minute. Miss Prentice, I would advise you when  
shaking hands to do so with a single stroke, so—dropping off all useless  
movements just as one does when laying bricks scientifically. Ah,  
when we dead awaken. How wonderful scientific management is! But

If the Scientific Manager rules out the rule of thumb,  
If to the charms of usefulness the lazy ones succumb,  
Even in the Public Library there'll be a few who still will ask,  
Ain't the keeping of statistics far more deadly than the task?

How far have you gotten with your list?

A. P. I've only done three yards of it. On account of the experiments I could only do 44 inches yesterday. (Begins to unroll manuscript.)

How to get a position and how to keep it.

How to attract the birds.

How we are fed. Oh, what are we going to have for lunch?

I. B. Yes, what? That is a very important item in efficiency. You know in the *Revue Generale des Sciences* "the author considers the case of a postman who travels daily 35 kilometers on a bicycle in a level country, and who kept a record of the quantity and quality of the food which he consumed during a fortnight, the calorific value of which per day was calculated to be 3,200 calories. The day's work was estimated to be 140,000 kilogram-meters, corresponding to 330 calories of heat. Assuming a value of one-third for the efficiency of the human motor, Dr. Imbert determined that the postman's daily work required the combustion of an amount of food capable of furnishing 990 calories—an estimate which agrees very closely with one based on numerous physiological experiments showing that the human organism at rest requires daily on an average a quantity of food capable of furnishing about 2,300 calories. Now the difference between that and the 3,200 calories representing the value of his daily food as recorded by the postman gives a difference of 900 calories, which agrees fairly well with the 990 calories obtained by the first method of calculation. The mean equivalent may be taken as 945 calories."

A. P. Why don't you conduct an experiment like that? It would be so swell—just the sort of thing people put in theses.

I. B. True, true. I must telephone to the different branches at once. I'll ask them to time themselves when eating and so make a test of food value as related to the human machine and purse.

A. P. Won't that make a taking phrase for the administration committee of the A. L. A.—Speeds and Feeds?

I. B. Well, to sum up. Indispensable food:

Catalogue Department—Peanuts and Busy Bee Bargains.

Crunden Branch—Liverwurst.

Divoll Branch—Marble polish.

Common to all depts. and branches—Peanut butter.

A. P. Yes; peanut butter. You know Miss Crocker says that Mr. Barker made a great mistake in not devoting one refrigerator to the exclusive housing of peanut butter, shelved alphabetically under owner.

I. B. No, seriously. To tabulate:

Peanut Butter—

Balance to be eaten up Nov. 1.

Balance eaten up or extra peanut butter eaten up in December.

Sick leave.

Taken from ice-box.

Balance to be eaten up Dec. 1.

I. B. Then take the essential foods of the different departments and branches and make them all into one menu.

A. P. Each assistant eat the whole collection!

I. B. Exactly; keeping careful records of time consumed in chewing and time consumed in swallowing. It would be a fine idea, wouldn't it, to have the same assistant eat the same menu for two or three weeks in succession to obtain gain in speed?

A. P. But won't it conflict?

I. B. Conflict? What do you mean? Under Scientific Management "it becomes the duty and also the *pleasure* of those who are engaged in the management to develop laws" by experimenting upon themselves. What such experiments require is ginger.

A. P. Yes; Jamaica ginger.

I. B. Now, Miss Prentice, it's time for us to take our morning exercise. You be the public and I'll be the assistant. Now, notice my personality. May I help you find a book? What sort of a book would you like?

A. P. I'd like a book by McCutcheon.

I. B. Now, Miss Prentice, in a case like that you must substitute. Give him some author beginning with the same letter. There's George Meredith and William Morris and Maeterlinck. They all begin with M and their books must be circulated.

A. P. I'm awfully fond of Mary J. Holmes.

I. B. Then give them Hewlett or Hugo or Thomas Hardy. Tess is a little gem under the desk.

A. P. (aside). All the gems seem to be under the desk. But I'm just crazy about the Rosary. Haven't you any books in by Mrs. Barclay?

I. B. There's your chance to work off Balzac—and Boswell's Life of Johnson; that begins with B.

*Mr. Soulard Cabanne Barr wanders in.*

I. B. (near-sightedly). Miss Prentice, there's a boy over there on the adult side. Tell him to take off his hat and go right into the Intermediate. He has no business reading those books.

A. P. Why, I don't think that's a little boy. No, it's a chemist—one of those Harvard chemists.

I. B. Oh! Notice my personality. May I help you find a book? What sort of books do you like?

S. C. B. I like books with a great deal of go and speed in them—things that just fly along.

I. B. Oh, yes, yes. The Technical World this month has an excellent article and the Aviation number of the Scientific American and the Engineering News on high speed engines. Just a minute and I will get them for you. (Goes off.)

A. P.

Serene I fold my hands and wait;  
Nor strive for high efficiency.  
I rave no more 'gainst time and fate;  
For lo! my raise will come to me.

I stay my haste, I make delays,  
For what avails this speed and show?  
I'll throw away the rule and watch  
And struggle hard to get a beau.

May I help you find a book? Would you like something on Scientific Management, for instance?

S. C. B. Scientific Management? No. (Bangs about.) Pardon my violence, but I am so sick of hearing people discuss Sc. Man. and Eugenics and dollar opera and all such that it gets to be a fearful bore. Give me something like McCutcheon or the Common Law. There's a book that will last after chaps like that James fellow are dead. It's real.

A. P. Then don't you want to see the books we keep under the desk? They aren't as interesting as the spicy books at the Famous, but some of them are quite as exciting.

S. C. B. (Goes behind desk). A. P. (Sings first line of Every Little Movement.)

*Iva Branch returns with pile of magazines.*

S. C. B. (coming out). I've found just what I want. Miss Prentice was kind enough to let me see the books under the desk. (I. B. gasps.) Have you been following Phillips' last story? It's very strong—very strong. Such philosophy! Well, thank you very much. I hope you'll help me next time, Miss Prentice.

*S. C. B. and A. P. join hands and back off stage.*

A. P. If not, why not?

*I. B. left gasping.*

The terminal station of this library pilgrimage was in the Children's Room, where Miss Power and Miss Frances Bowman received the staff and its guests. After all were seated the lights were turned out and Miss Gray and eight of the small pages of the library staff entertained the company with a Brownie dance, which they performed in costume before a blazing wood fire in the fireplace at one end of the room. Later cakes and fruit punch were served in the same room by members of the Stations and Traveling Library Departments, Mrs. Sawyer, Chief of the Instruction Department, presiding.

As the dancers melted away (into the corridor) and the lights were raised, the staff began to satisfy its inner needs, and the staff opening of the St. Louis Public Library came to an end. It was a unique occasion, to be remembered.

The committee in charge consisted of Mr. Albert Diephuis, librarian of the Crunden Branch (chairman); Miss Jessie Sargent, first assistant in the Issue Department, Central Building, and Miss Margery Quigley, librarian of the Divoll Branch. Refreshments were in charge of Miss Elsie Miller, chief of Stations Department, and Miss Effie L. Power, Supervisor of Work with Children.







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